Design and development of qualifications

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RQF/CQFW Condition E1

1. These are the policies and procedures for designing and developing qualifications. Broadly qualifications have aims and objectives provided in the qualifications handbooks [2] and the design of the qualification is intended to ensure that these aims and objectives are met. (Condition E1.1b) [3] More recently the DfE has required Awarding Organisations to publish purpose statements on their web sites for qualifications used in performance measures. These statements are available here. [4] (Condition E1.1a) [3] With respect to qualifications in the Entry level to Level 3 range, used by younger learners there is a common purpose in ensuring progression routes to higher level learning are kept open either in directly related subjects (Condition E1.2a) [5] or in other subjects where, for example, digital literacy is important (Condition E1.2b) [5]. This is relevant to both academic, vocational and mixed learning. As an example, the TLM "substantial vocational qualification" (SVQ) in Managing IT Systems at Level 2, while targeted specifically on a workplace role in systems management (Condition E1.2e) [5] and therefore employment in managing computer systems running GNU/Linux operating systems, (Condition E1.2d) [5] it would also contribute suitable background knowledge, understanding and skills for further study in a range of disciplines related to digital technologies from Computer Science to Electronic Engineering. This means that these qualifications are in addition preparing learners to progress to a qualification in another subject area, (Condition E1.2b) [5] It will also make anyone much more self-sufficient in any generic use of computers whether at home or at work.

2. In most cases, TLM qualifications form family groups with progression routes to enable learners to improve their competence over time and to motivate learning throughout a course. (Condition E1.1b) [3] There is ample evidence [6] that having a goal is motivating and coursework assessment [7] that is directly related to achieving the qualification keeps the mind focused on the goal in day to day work. The qualification design strategy is to use this to promote tighter engagement and therefore raised standards over time. The benefit to learners is further strengthened by making the learning process as far as possible directly related to the assessment process and this also ensures valid assessment [8] ie the assessment is assessing the learning it is intended to assess. What matters is a fair judgment that the learner has achieved the learning outcome, that the evidence supports the assessment criteria and that the assessment criteria are a fair indication that the learning outcome has been achieved. Methods that enable increasingly accurate self-assessment and peer review [9] maximise opportunities to foster learning skills [10] that will transfer to other contexts preparing learners for a changing world and a more rational approach [11] to decision making. Clearly any self-assessment must be reliably verified by an independent assessor [12] to ensure that it is accurate and truly representative of what the learner knows, understands and can do. In a technological age where change occurs quickly attitudes and process are equally important. Adaptability to change is important across all learning sectors but particularly related to occupations where digital technologies dominate practice. In any particular qualification the qualification proposal will identify the specific benefits to learners that it supports in addition to more generic contributions to the learning process (Condition E1.2) [5] but the generic attitudinal development [13] to learning is an important consideration for lifelong learning. The amygdala [14] is as important as the pre-frontal cortex [15] and TLM qualifications are designed to enable development of both.

3. TLM account managers are in continual dialogue with users of its qualifications. The demand for a new qualification normally arise from one or more of four key methods.

- Third party approaches to develop qualifications to support a specific curriculum development.
- Demand from users of existing qualifications for a new version to reduce bureaucracy and

enable teachers to spend more time on teaching and less on administration.
- Demand from users to reduce costs.
- Changes due to government actions that fundamentally change curriculum priorities.

An examples of bullet one include the Designing, Engineering, and Constructing a Sustainable Built Environment qualifications which came initially from demand from the construction industry employers including Mott MacDonald [16], Royal Insititute of Chartered Surveyers [17], Bam Construction [18], Seddon Construction [19] and many others. There was clear demand from schools and so a sequence of qualifications providing an appropriate progression route to either apprenticeships or higher education has been developed.

An example of bullet two is the ITQ qualifications [20] used by Birmingham Adult Education Services [21] and for offender learning [22]. With offender learning a significant issue was offenders going on parole at short notice and not receiving their certificates. TLM's fast track moderation coupled with local printing and authentication of certificates solves this problem.

An example of bullet three is the qualification enterprise and preparation for employment was designed to replace two other qualifications for Archbishop Sentamu Academy [23] at lower cost than either of the other two. This saves the school several thousane pounts a year that they can then spend on improved learning support.

An example of the final bullet point is the development of Open Systems Computing qualifications that are based on the revisions to the national curriculum [24] shifting the emphasis to computing from ICT. There was clear demand evidenced through the professional teacher associations NAACE [25] and CAS [26] as well as Mirandanet [27] the group related to research in technology innovation that there was a need for courses and qualifications that are a balance of Computer Science, ICT and Digital Literacy rather than pure Computer Science that is the focus for GCSE. This was further reinforced by the trade association the Open Source Consortium [28] and recent Cabinet Office policy [29] on the need for government departments and agencies to support open standards.

TLM will only embark on developing a new qualification where the demand shows a clear commercial potential for recouping development costs and sustaining operational costs in line with its risk based approach. The demand is greater than development capacity so there is a queue and it is prioritised according to risk, the fit with the general company vision and the commercial potential. In most cases this will mean a need for potential for thousands of learners rather than tens or hundreds although it has to be recognised that the lead in time for take up can be several years, particularly with new innovation. Demand is further backed by a learning rationale provided in the qualification purpose statement [30] making the benefit to learners clear. This is in the context of the overall design rational [31] associated with TLM's INGOT brand. In the last analysis support from users will be the defining factor since without it there will be no commercial basis for development. TLM will provide estimates of the number of likely candidates on the Regulatory IT system and provides evidence of numbers several times per year as required. (Conditions E1.3, 1.4, 1.5) [32]

4. All TLM qualifications posted to the Register of regulated qualifications will conforme to the require title conventions. (Condition E2.1) [33]

They will include:
(a) the name of the awarding organisation,
(b) the level of the qualification,
(c) the type of qualification (where the qualification has a type),
(d) a concise indication of the content of the qualification, and
(e) any endorsement known at the time the qualification is submitted to the Register.

The title will reflect the learning outcomes of the qualification and it will be used routinely so that end users are able to identify similar qualifications and relate units from any source. All efforts will be made to reduce the risk of ambiguity or misleading titles for qualifications. (Condition E2.2, 2.3, 2.4) [34]

5. TLM publishes the specification for its qualifications in its handbooks, web site and on RITS /QiW before qualifications are made available (Condition E3.1) [35]. The specification includes as a minimum:

(a) the qualification's objective,
(b) any other qualification which a Learner must have completed before taking the qualification,
(c) any prior knowledge, skills or understanding which the Learner is required to have before taking the qualification,
(d) units which a Learner must have completed before the qualification will be awarded and any optional routes,
(e) any other requirements which a Learner must have satisfied before the Learner will be assessed or before the qualification will be awarded,
(f) the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of the qualification (giving a clear indication of their coverage and depth),
(g) the method of any assessment and any associated requirements relating to it,
(h) the criteria against which Learners' levels of attainment will be measured (such as assessment criteria or exemplars),
(i) any specimen assessment materials, and
(j) any specified levels of attainment.

(Condition E3.2) [36]

The handbook provides details of the evidence expected from learners and the types of activities relevant to the assessment of the qualifications. It provides a comprehensive description of why the qualification is fit for purpose. (Condition E3.3) [37]

6. In designing assessments qualifications, TLM ensures that it has sufficient resources to enable the assessment to be delivered effectively and efficiently. In most cases this involves using approved assessors to gather evidence as a normal part of their duties thus reducing costs and ensuring that the assessment is closely related to the learning contexts being assessed. (Condition E4.1) [38]

7. As a minimum assessments will have the following characteristics:

Assessments
(a) will be fit for purpose by closely relating assessment criteria to the learning context.
(b) can be delivered efficiently by making them as far as possible part of everyday work, and using on-line systems.
(c) have flexibility enabling Centres to develop cost effective arrangements for their delivery, using only the resources which would be reasonably expected to be required or which are provided by TLM through its innovative technologies, eg on-line testing [39] and on-line evidence management [40] and progress tracking.
(d) permit Reasonable Adjustments [41] to be made, while minimising the need for them by for example providing Centre flexibility in delivery
(e) will allow each Learner to generate evidence which can be authenticated in keeping with the overall design rationale. [31]
(f) allow each specified level of attainment detailed in the specification to be reached by a Learner who has attained the required level of knowledge, skills and understanding, and
(g) allow Assessors to be able to differentiate accurately and consistently between a range of attainments by Learners using the overall design rationale. [31]

(Condition E4.2) [42]

8. TLM's policies and procedures [43] include review and quality assurance to ensure that all qualifications comply with the Conditions of Recognition before they are submitted to RITs or made available.

9. TLM's policies for unit design and and the assigning of credit value are within the systems for whole qualifications reflect those provided for ROF Unit development [44]and Rules of Combination.

[45]

10. TLM will allow Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for its centres as stated in Arrangements with Third Parties [46], this is based on documentary evidence of the prior teaching followed by an initial audit and moderation of work submitted to give TLM Chief Assessors confidence that the RPL guided learning hours are reflected in the level of competency shown within the work/test environment.

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Links
[1] https://theingots.org/community/ofqual_policies
[2] https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/68295484/Specification%20for%20L1%20L2%20Opensystems%20Computingr5.pdf
[3] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E1.1
[4] https://theingots.org/community/endorse#Purpose
[5] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E1.2
[6] http://www.academia.edu/1513252/An_evidence-based_predictive_model_for_motivating_engagement_completion_and_success_in_freshmen_engineering_students
[7] http://www.wikihow.com/Motivate-Students#Creating_Challenges_sub
[8] http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/assment/as5relia.htm
[9] http://www.reading.ac.uk/engageinassessment/peer-and-self-assessment/
[10] http://improvingteaching.co.uk/2013/08/17/knowledge-skills-and-false-dichotomies/
[11] http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v506/n7486/full/nature12786.html
[12] https://theingots.org/community/ofqual_assessment
[13] http://studycoaching.wordpress.com/2007/12/05/the-importance-of-your-attitude-on-learning/
[14] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amygdala#Function
[15] http://www.human-memory.net/brain_parts.html
[16] https://www.mottmac.com/
[17] http://www.rics.org/uk/
[18] http://www.bam.co.uk/
[19] http://www.seddon.co.uk/
[20] http://www.e-skills.com/standards-and-qualifications/it-user-qualifications---itq/
[21] http://www.services.bgfl.org/myportal/57.cfm
[22] http://www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/education-and-employment/custodial-education/offender-learning-and-skills-service-olass
[23] http://www.sentamu.com/
[24] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-computing-programmes-of-study
[25] http://www.naace.co.uk/
[26] http://www.computingatschool.org.uk/
[27] http://www.mirandanet.ac.uk/
[28] http://www.opensourceconsortium.org/
[29] http://https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-standards-principles/open-standards-principles
[30] https://theingots.org/community/endorse#L3CD
[31] https://theingots.org/community/qual_design
[32] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E1.3
[33] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E2.1
[34] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E2.2
[35] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E3.1

(function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){ (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o), m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m) })(window,document,'script','//www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga'); ga('create', 'UA-46896377-2', 'auto'); ga('send', 'pageview');

[36] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E3.2
[37] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E3.3
[38] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E4.1
[39] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSZqH7eMoQ0&list=UU0Qc5AI6ck1e8gSAMZPAGlg
[40] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-SBjjoBn6Y&list=UU0Qc5AI6ck1e8gSAMZPAGlg
[41] https://theingots.org/community/node/5494
[42] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualE#E4.2
[43] https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AtgK7Uqp_o3odEdnaDUwU1dFUmhYZXp4U1pXaUtrNmc&usp=drive_web#gid=11
[44] https://theingots.org/community/node/5503
[45] https://theingots.org/community/QCF4.1-4.4
[46] https://theingots.org/community/ofqualTPs